

Message Text

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SUBJECT: MEETING OF INDUSTRY COMMITTEE'S AD HOC GROUP
ON ENERGY AND RAW MATERIALS

REF: A) STATE 237206; B) OECD DSTI/IND/75.28

1. AD HOC GROUP APPROVED AGENDA BUT LITTLE ELSE.

AS PER INSTRUCTIONS CONTAINED IN REF A, US DEL SUGGESTED THAT "GOVERNMENT ACTION" SHOULD TOP PRIORITIES OF CHECK LIST HEADINGS (AGENDA ITEM 3), TO BE FOLLOWED BY CONSERVATION, SUBSTITUTION AND CHANGES IN INDUSTRIAL STRUCTURES. WHILE US PROPOSAL RECEIVED SOME SUPPORT, NO CONSENSUS EMERGED AND ISSUE WILL BE REFERRED BACK TO INDUSTRY COMMITTEE.

2. AD HOC GROUP WAS ALSO UNABLE TO REACH CONSENSUS AS TO PRIORITY RANKING OF POSSIBLE GOVERNMENTAL POLICIES LISTED UNDER FOUR MAIN CATEGORIES. UK DEL MADE POINT THAT ENERGY QUESTIONS ARE RECEIVING COMPREHENSIVE TREATMENT BY IEA AND DOUBTED ABILITY OF AD HOC GROUP TO MAKE SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION. HE THOUGHT THAT GROUP

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COULD FOCUS ON IMPACT ON INDUSTRY OF ALTERNATIVE ENERGY

SOURCES OR NEW SUPPLIES: E.G., THE IMPACT OF NUCLEAR ENERGY ON ELECTRO-ENGINEERING INDUSTRY, AND CHANGES IN INDUSTRIAL STRUCTURES THAT MAY RESULT FROM NORTH SEA PRODUCTION. AGAIN, NO CONSENSUS EMERGED AND QUESTION WILL BE REFERRED BACK TO IC FOR RESOLUTION.

3. RE AGENDA ITEMS 4 AND 5 (ENERGY ASPECTS AND POSSIBILITY OF CASE STUDIES), GROUP GAVE STRONG SUPPORT TO US DEL POSITION THAT NEED FOR FURTHER QUESTIONNAIRES OR CASE STUDIES IS NOT YET DEMONSTRATED, AND THAT AD HOC GROUP SHOULD AWAIT COMPLETION OF ONGOING WORK OF THE FOUR WORKING PARTIES. (FRANCE, AND BELGIUM ACQUIESCED AFTER MAKING PROPOSAL TO INITIATE CASE STUDIES OF ENERGY-INTENSIVE GLASS AND CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRIES.) US DEL CONCURRED WITH PROPOSAL MADE BY CHAIRMAN THAT MEMBER COUNTRIES COULD SUBMIT SUMMARIES OF ENERGY CONSERVATION MEASURES ALREADY IN EFFECT.

4. INTERESTING BUT INCONCLUSIVE EXCHANGE DEVELOPED BETWEEN AUSTRALIAN AND UK DELS OVER "CHANGES IN INDUSTRIAL STRUCTURE". UK DEL SAID THAT EXPORTS OF PLANT AND EQUIPMENT TO OIL AND RAW MATERIAL-PRODUCING COUNTRIES WOULD RESULT FROM LONG-TERM ECONOMIC IMPERATIVES RATHER THAN DELIBERATE GOVERNMENT POLICIES. AUSTRALIAN DEL COUNTERED THAT GOA SEES PLANT RELOCATION AS A PRIMARY GOVERNMENTAL GOAL RATHER THAN A SECONDARY EFFECT.

5. VIRTUALLY ALL AD HOC GROUP MEMBERS EXPRESSED A DEGREE OF CONFUSION AS TO WHAT IC EXPECTED OF IT. A NUMBER OF DELEGATES (AUSTRALIA, UK, SWEDEN, GERMANY) SUBSEQUENTLY TOLD US DEL THAT THEIR GOVERNMENTS QUESTIONED THE CONTINUED EXISTENCE OF THE GROUP. SINCE MANY COUNTRIES BELIEVE THE ENERGY AND RAW MATERIALS CRISIS IS OVER, THEY CONCLUDE THAT THE GROUP IS ESSENTIALLY WITHOUT A RAISON D'ETRE.

COMMENTS:

MISSION SUGGESTS THAT US CONSIDER MERITS OF TERMINATING AD HOC GROUP AND APPORTION ITS CONCERNS TO OTHER RELEVANT BODIES.

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